

## 2026 Trail Ambassador

**What is the Trail Ambassador Program?** In 2007 the Minnesota State Legislature, in an effort to curb OHV negative impacts, passed legislation requiring the establishment of an OHV Safety and Conservation Program. From that, the MN DNR Division of Enforcement's Education and Safety Training Section, the Division of Parks and Trails, the Forestry Division and input from the OHV User Groups, have worked together to develop the 'MN DNR Volunteer Trail Ambassador Program'.

**Who is a Trail Ambassador?** Volunteer Trail Ambassadors participating in the same OHV activity as other users creates an added level of integrity and credibility. As a result, ambassadors will be able to explain what actions are prohibited as well as why (i.e. dangerous or destructive).

**What is the biggest or most notable change for 2026?** The application is going to look different and be a little longer than it has been in the past. The main additions are the Office of Grants Management's requirements, which include the legal verbiage.

**What is a scoring system?** Each year the TA Grant has up to \$250,000 from the ATV account and \$20,000 from the OHM account to distribute amongst the Clubs that apply for this grant, all grants require a scoring process to ensure fairness.

### How will the applications be scored?

The scoring system will be based on a 100-point scale:

- Completed App (all forms returned on time) - 20pts
- Proposed Trail Log - 20pts
- Diversity of geographic locations to monitor (anticipated # of hours based on A, B, C priority trails) - 20pts
- Proposed Expenditures - 20pts
- Training completed (TA and GM) - 20pts

**Has the Application deadline changed?** Yes, the application deadline is 11:59 pm March 15, 2026. Late applications will not be accepted.

**What type of diversity will be looked at?** ATV/OHM trails are established in most areas of the state. The purpose of this program is to be the eyes and ears for the state by monitoring the trails for safety and rideability, as well as increasing safety education. We have identified some trails and riders in the state that are underserved.

For purposes of this grant, the definitions of underserved are:

- Those trail that are not currently monitored by TAs
- Riders in less populated parts of the state.

**Why is there a list of eligible expenses?** Eligible expenses are a requirement of the Office of Grants Management to ensure the grant dollars are going to the intended purpose of the program.

### Eligible Expenses:

- Fuel/oil for ATVs
- Mileage for vehicles towing ATVs
- Lodging (by written request)
- Minor maintenance and preventive maintenance of ATVs
- Safety Equipment for TA's...such as helmets, gloves, boots, chest protectors, goggles, two-way radios, flashlight, tow strap, rope
- Trail bags/storage boxes
- Digital camera/GPS device/batteries
- Cleaning fees (washing ATVs/protective clothing)
- CPR/First Aid Training
- Office equipment/communication services
- Lids for kids (helmets for students)
- ATV Safety Training Equipment (specific to participating ATV Clubs)

**What if my Club has an expense that isn't on the list of eligible expenses?** Clubs wanting to have a variance to the eligible expenses list must submit a written request to the State and have it approved prior to the riding season.

**My Club is planning on a purchase in the future. Can we "bank" or keep the money from one season to the next?** No, any ineligible or unexpended funds will be required to be returned to the All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) or Off-Highway Motorcycle (OHM) account in the Natural Resources Fund.

**Has the reporting process changed?** A small change for the 2026 season, the trail logs will be completed by the TA, submitted to the GM. The GM then reviews for accuracy, initials/dates and submits to DNR via email to [tagrantprogram.dnr@state.mn.us](mailto:tagrantprogram.dnr@state.mn.us).

**How will End-Point change with the list of eligible expenses now listed?** The only change on reporting with the eligible expense list is that all receipts and documentation must be submitted with the end-point expenditure.

**Insurance Requirement:** Each club participating in the program is required to carry a \$1 million general liability insurance policy and list the State of MN as an additional insured. If your club currently has an insurance policy, verify with your agent that Trail Ambassador activities are covered. If additional costs are associated with this new requirement, you may be able to receive reimbursement for the additional cost through the grant, with a written request. Proof of insurance is required to be submitted with the grant application.